

An Open Letter
to my Fellow-members of
The Theosophical Society

LETTER NO. 8

MAY 17th, 1939

DEAR BRETHREN,

In the series of "Open Letters" preceding the present one, I have sought to stress the urgent need of our brethren throughout the world to bestir themselves to specially intensified service so as to be able to combat effectively the tide of lawlessness and destruction that is threatening to overwhelm peace and subvert the world's ordered progress. The nature of the particular work that we, as individual members and as groups and Lodges, are called upon to do at this moment of the world's unprecedented travail, has already been indicated. If the basic principle of brotherhood is the touchstone of all activities that should single out a Theosophist, his special responsibility in this regard is all the greater now, when the sinister influences of separatism and proud isolation—masquerading under alluring titles and ideologies—seem

to gather strength, claiming sovereignty over the beneficent forces that work for brotherhood and unity.

It is the Theosophist's especial duty to endeavour constantly to balance the several forces that are at work in the world and thus intelligently participate, each according to the measure of his understanding, in the world's evolutionary march. It is his special responsibility, not only because he has pledged to preserve brotherhood as against all acts and tendencies negating that eternal principle, but also because of his realization of the certainty of knowledge, unveiled by the Ancient Science, that man *is* more than he *knows*, and that therefore in arduous times, such as these, forces and faculties beyond his ordinary ken might find in him a channel through which to exercise their beneficent influence.

This work of restoring the reign of law and of attempting to maintain the balance of forces, which we see so disturbed today as to present to an unprecedented degree the phenomena of hate and distrust and the seeming triumph of might over right, needs even further augmenting, because of the rapid extension of the area over which the forces of darkness seem to focus their

shadows, and because of the diminishing number of avenues available for the beneficent forces to work through. We ought, therefore, to utilize every means available, both on this and on other planes—should we have conscious access to them—to check the onrush of these destructive forces.

Yet, this is only one aspect of the urgent work we are called upon to undertake now. The other aspect concerns the ceaseless effort that must needs be made towards understanding and lending a hand in arriving at possible solutions of those world problems on the right resolution of which the peace and prosperity of the world so much depends.

Of such problems, India, in a very vital sense, is, perhaps, the foremost. Because of its particular importance, this letter is being exclusively devoted to it.

The problem of India is a world problem. Because of this, our President-Mother, who foresaw an assurance of world peace and world progress in India's freedom and her restoration to her rightful place in the comity of Nations, persistently called upon our brethren, wherever they might live or work, to "remember India, think of India, and know India to the true Hope of the

Nations of the World. You hasten the growth of all that is dear to you as you hasten the growth of India," she often used to assure us, "and no true Theosophist, and certainly no one who is working for the Inner Government of the world, will be careless of India's welfare, for the sake of the people of India, but far more for the sake of all that India is, the mighty Power she is, as the veritable Holy Land of the future. . . .

Says Dr. Besant, explaining the source of her own inspiration for India's service covering over quarter of a century :

My own life in India, since I came to it in 1893 to make it my home, has been devoted to one purpose, to give back to India her ancient Freedom. I had joined The Theosophical Society in 1889, and knew that one of the purposes for which it was intended by the ever-living Rishis—who sent to the western world as its Founders, Their Messengers H. P. Blavatsky and H. S. Olcott—was the rescue of India from the materialism which was strangling her true life by the revival of ancient philosophical and scientific religions, and, by the placing of India as an equal partner in a great Indo-British Common-wealth, would avert a war of colour, and bind East and West together in a Brotherhood which would usher in an Era of Co-operation and Peace. . . .

The value of a free India, both for her own children and for the sake of world

peace, is thus envisaged by our President-Mother: "If India be fully admitted into the Commonwealth of Nations, if she possesses Dominion Status at home as well as abroad, then may a World Peace brood over our seething Nations." India, Dr. Besant urged, should determine for herself her own form of self-government.

But India cannot perform her mission to the world while she is a subject Nation. The world is the poorer by the silence imposed on her.

Also, while India suffers, no portion of our globe can be free from suffering. Even on the physical plane itself, a study of magnetic currents over a period of years clearly shows that India is neither East nor West, North nor South, but is a veritable heart of the world, taking into herself first East and then West for their purification and vivification. If this is India's magnetic function on the physical plane, how much more is this true in those inner and spiritual regions of which the physical is but a shadowy reflection!

In order that India may be helped to function as the heart of the world, our brethren in India should immediately try to set their house in order. They should expedite this sacred duty-not only for the sake of the Motherland, but for

the sake of the whole world. India, for the sake of the world, for the sake of civilization, for the sake of world peace, should speak out again her word of peace and power, should endeavour to make her voice heard by the nations of the world—the voice of her age-long spirit—for the spiritual regeneration of the world. At this moment of world crisis, it is distressing to notice the widening of the gulf between her several groups—all children of a common Mother. They ought to realise that the differences which seem to divide them are superficial, inconsequent, irrelevant to the winning of Freedom for the Motherland. Our India brethren ought to consider no sacrifice too great for re-establishing India's internal peace and harmony so that there may be no dissonance in the note that India ought to realise her glorious mission: "To lead the world towards spirituality, and of showing to all the way to intellectual splendour, to higher art, to physical prosperity, even as she proved in her earlier life that these were the fruits of a civilization, based on spiritual wisdom."

It is distressing to watch the disruptive elements that deter India from fulfilling her exalted destiny. First, her children should

immediately set to work to close up her ranks. Unity is India's most urgent need. Second, she ought to try to reflect truly her real Self in all aspects of her national life. India's unique value to the world primarily consists in revitalizing her age-old civilization built on the bedrock of the spiritual oneness of all life. India should become truly India. Thirdly, she should strongly resist all tendency in whatever sphere of life towards isolation, unfortunately so very evident in India today. Let us hear Dr. Besant on this point :

No Nation is complete and perfect within itself ; in a Society of Nations lives a higher and fuller life, and the great new individual of this embryo Commonwealth needs the addition of India, a Nation, for the mutual benefit of herself and of all the rest. Alone, India will be less great than as an organ in the larger body, animated by a higher unfoldment of the One Life. As the life in a Nation, so is the Life in Federated Nations greater than the life in any one of them. Into such a Federation may India enter, if she will.

Here are wise words for politicians to ponder over in formulating their "foreign policies" in politics. Applying it to India, Dr. Besant asks : "Shall India make that Vision come true, or shall she reject her glorious opportunity and choose isolation and—decay ? "

Dr. Besant further appeals :

I would most strongly and earnestly pray both India and Britian to remain linked hand-in-hand, for the good of the world, for the sake of humanity in the present, and still more in the future.

From that Union, there shall arise a mightier comradeship, or rather Commonwealth, than the world has ever known, a Commonwealth that, in God's own good time, shall put an end to war.

At the same time, she sounds the warning :

Without India, Britain would fall from her position as the greatest of world powers, while with India, and possibly re-linked with the United States in close alliance, she would lead the forward evolution of humanity for centuries to come.

Again, says Dr. Besant :

... I cannot look back over the three centuries and ten years from 1612 to 1922, and miss the golden thread of a divine purpose in bringing under one Crown the root-stock and the youngest sub-race of the Aryan Race Is not that purpose that these two may be joined in an Indo-British Commonwealth, composed of coloured and of white nations, of Asiatics and Europeans, of Eastern and Westerns, of Religion and Applied Science, forming a model, making certain the realization, of a World Federation, wherein Justice shall reign instead of Power, and Law shall put an end to Violence ?

Georges S. Arundale

Printed and published by C. Subbarayudu at the
Vasanta Press, Adyar, Madras.